CSOs, Evidence and Policy Influence
Learning Workshop
Workshop, Nairobi, 2nd December, 2004
CSOs: Definitions and Functions

- **Definition:** “organizations that work in an arena between the household, the private sector and the state to negotiate matters of public concern”.

- **Functions:**
  - representation
  - technical inputs and advocacy
  - capacity-building
  - service-delivery
  - social functions
Definitions

- **Research**: "any systematic effort to increase the stock of knowledge"
- **Policy**: a "purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors"
  - Agendas / policy horizons
  - Official statements documents
  - Patterns of spending
  - Implementation processes
  - Activities on the ground
Generic Policy Processes

1. Problem Definition / Agenda Setting
2. Constructing the Policy Alternatives / Policy Formulation
3. Choice of Solution / Selection of Preferred Policy Option
4. Policy Design
5. Policy Implementation and Monitoring
6. Evaluation

The Policy Cycle
Existing theory – useful in DCs?

1. Linear model
2. Perception
3. Tipping point
4. ‘Contingency’
5. Policy
6. Systemic identity
7. External
8. ‘Room for manoeuvre’
9. ‘Street level bureaucracy’
10. Policy and the change process
11. Policy and the decision to change
12. Disjoint
13. The ‘tipping point’
14. Crisis
15. ‘Framework of possible theory’
16. Variables for Credibility, Beach
17. The source is as important as content, Gladwell
18. Linear model of communication, Shannon
19. Persuasive model, Bitzer
20. Strategic stories, Haythornthwaite
21. ‘Technology’
22. ‘Confidence’
23. ‘Norm of aspiration’
24. ‘Technology’
25. ‘Confidence’
26. ‘Norm of aspiration’
27. ‘Technology’
28. ‘Confidence’
29. ‘Norm of aspiration’
30. ‘Technology’
31. ‘Confidence’
32. ‘Norm of aspiration’
33. National Systems of Innovation

www.odi.org.uk/rapid/lessons/theory
Reality...

- "The whole life of policy is a chaos of purposes and accidents. It is not at all a matter of the rational implementation of the so-called decisions through selected strategies."

- "Most policy research on African agriculture is irrelevant to agricultural and overall economic policy in Africa."

- "Policymakers "seem to regard 'research' as the opposite of 'action' rather than the opposite of 'ignorance'."

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Reality II ... Parallel Universes?

Vincent Cable – MP on legislators & use of evidence:

- Speed
- Superficiality
- Spin
- Secrecy
- Scientific Ignorance

More at: www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Meetings/Evidence
An Analytical Framework

External Influences
Socio-economic and cultural influences, donor policies etc

The political context –
political and economic structures and processes, culture, institutional pressures, incremental vs radical change etc.

The links between policy and research communities –
networks, relationships, power, competing discourses, trust, knowledge etc.

The evidence –
credibility, the degree it challenges received wisdom, research approaches and methodology, simplicity of the message, how it is packaged etc.
Political Context: Key Areas

- The macro political context (democracy, governance, media freedom; academic freedom)
- The sector / issue process (*Policy uptake = demand – contestation*) [NB Demand: political and societal. Power.]
- How policymakers think (narratives & policy streams)
- Policy implementation and practice (bureaucracies, incentives, street level, room for manoeuvre, participatory approaches)
- Decisive moments in the policy process (policy processes, votes, policy windows and crises)
- Context is crucial, but you can maximize your chances
Evidence: Relevance and credibility

- Key factor – did it provide a solution to a problem?
- Relevance:
  - Topical relevance – What to do?
  - Operational usefulness – How to do it?
- Credibility:
  - Research approach
  - Of researcher > of evidence itself
- Strenuous advocacy efforts are often needed
- Communication
Links: Feedback and Networks

- Feedback processes often prominent in successful cases.
- Trust & legitimacy
- Networks:
  - Epistemic communities
  - Policy networks
  - Advocacy coalitions
- The role of individuals: connectors, mavens and salesmen, champions.
External Influence

- Big “incentives” can spur evidence-based policy – e.g. EU accession, PRSP processes.
- And some interesting examples of donors trying new things re. supporting research
- But, we really don’t know whether and how donors can best promote use of evidence in policymaking (credibility vs backlash)
Conclusions

• Research is essential but...
• Other work is needed to ensure it contributes to the development and implementation.
• Clear lessons about how are emerging:
  – Political context is crucial – understand it to maximize your chances
  – Figure out what evidence is needed and how to package it for policy makers
  – Collaborate with other actors
The Analytical Framework

External Influences
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The evidence – credibility, the degree it challenges received wisdom, research approaches and methodology, simplicity of the message, how it is packaged etc.
A Practical Framework

External Influences
- Campaigning, Lobbying
- Scientific information exchange & validation

Politics and Policymaking
- Media, Advocacy, Networking

Policy analysis, & research

Political context
- Research, learning & thinking

Links
- evidence
Using the framework

- The external environment: Who are the key actors? What is their agenda? How do they influence the political context?
- The political context: Is there political interest in change? Is there room for manoeuvre? How do they perceive the problem?
- The evidence: Is it there? Is it relevant? Is it practically useful? Are the concepts familiar or new? Does it need re-packaging?
- Links: Who are the key individuals? Are there existing networks to use? How best to transfer the information? The media? Campaigns?
What researchers need to do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What researchers need to know</th>
<th>What researchers need to do</th>
<th>How to do it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Context:</strong></td>
<td>• Get to know the policymakers.</td>
<td>• Work with them – seek commissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who are the policymakers?</td>
<td>• Identify friends and foes.</td>
<td>• Strategic opportunism – prepare for known events + resources for others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Is there demand for ideas?</td>
<td>• Prepare for policy opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What is the policy process?</td>
<td>• Look out for policy windows.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>• Establish credibility</td>
<td>• Build a reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is the current theory?</td>
<td>• Provide practical solutions</td>
<td>• Action-research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are the narratives?</td>
<td>• Establish legitimacy.</td>
<td>• Pilot projects to generate legitimacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How divergent is it?</td>
<td>• Present clear options</td>
<td>• Good communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use familiar narratives.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Links</strong></td>
<td>• Get to know the others</td>
<td>• Build partnerships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who are the stakeholders?</td>
<td>• Work through existing networks.</td>
<td>• Identify key networkers, mavens and salesmen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What networks exist?</td>
<td>• Build coalitions.</td>
<td>• Use informal contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who are the connectors, mavens and salesmen?</td>
<td>• Build new policy networks.</td>
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Skills of (pro-poor) policy entrepreneurs

- Storytellers
  ![Image of a storyteller]

- Engineers
  ![Image of an engineer]

- Networkers
  ![Image of a networker]

- Fixers
  ![Image of a fixer]
Practical Tools

Overarching Tools
- The RAPID Framework
- Using the Framework
- The Entrepreneurship Questionnaire

Communication Tools
- Communications Strategy
- SWOT analysis
- Message Design
- Making use of the media

Policy Influence Tools
- Influence Mapping & Power Mapping
- Lobbying and Advocacy
- Campaigning: A Simple Guide
- Competency self-assessment

Context Assessment Tools
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Forcefield Analysis
- Writeshops
- Policy Mapping
- Political Context Mapping

Research Tools
- Case Studies
- Episode Studies
- Surveys
- Bibliometric Analysis
- Focus Group Discussion
Outcome Mapping

- Focuses on changes in behaviour
- How programs facilitate change
- Recognizes the complexity of development
- Looks at logical rather than causal links
- Locates program goals within broader development goals
- Encourages innovation and risk-taking necessary
- All staff and partners are involved throughout
## Mapping Policy Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agendas</th>
<th>Formulation</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bureaucrats</td>
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<td>Civil Society</td>
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<td>State</td>
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Political Context Assessment Tool

- The macro political context
- The sector / issue process
- Policy implementation and practice
- Decisive moments in the policy process
- How policymakers think

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(e.g. from Middle East) Interests</th>
<th>Extent of Interests of Policymakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Interests</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Interests</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interests</td>
<td>6</td>
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Forcefield Analysis

Force Field Analysis Example

**Forces For Change**

1. Maintenance costs increasing
2. Raise volumes of output
3. Improve speed of production
4. Customers want new products

**Plan:**
Upgrade factory with new manufacturing machinery

**Forces Against Change**

1. Environmental impact of new techniques
2. Cost
3. Disruption
3. Staff frightened of new technology
3. Loss of staff overtime

**Total:**

Forces For Change: 10
Forces Against Change: 11

- Specific Change
- Identify Forces
  - (Identify Priorities)
  - (Develop Strategies)
Communications strategy

- Identify the audience(s)
- Identify the message(s)
- Promotion
- Evaluate impact and change as necessary
- Clear Strategy
  - Interactive
  - Multiple formats
Practical Tools

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Implications for CSOs

• Need to be able to:
  – Understand the political context
  – Do credible research
  – Communicate effectively
  – Work with others

• Need organisational capacity
  – Staff
  – Internal processes
  – Funds
Managing Think Tanks

- Type, Focus and Niche
- Staff and Motivation
- Quality Control
- Communication
- Getting the most from your board
- Fund-raising
- Financial Management

(surprisingly little on policy influence in different contexts)

[Source: Struyk, 2002]
Networks

• Roles of Policy Networks
  – Filtering
  – Amplifying
  – Investor / Provider
  – Facilitator
  – Convening
  – Communities

• Policy Code Sharing

• Some networks net; some networks work.
Further Information / Resources

- ODI Working Papers
- Bridging Research and Policy Book
- Meeting series Monograph
- Tools for Policy Impact
- RAPID Briefing Paper
- RAPID CDROM
- www.odi.org.uk/rapid
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